



The Everyday Battle

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- Focus** The everyday battle of spending time with God is the easiest battle to win. We just have to do our job by showing up! The Lord invites us to spend time with Him just like we would spend time with a person in our life, with two-way, intentional communication.
- Fun** Start your time together with the attitude of gratitude. For this week of Thanksgiving, have each person share three things for which they are thankful: a person, place, and thing.
- Review** Key Scriptures: Luke 15:31; Psalm 62:1, 5; Psalm 100:2; 1 Peter 5:7

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The father said to the eldest son, "You are always with me and all that I have is yours." God says the same to us. The older son was living in the same house as his father but may not have always been spending time communing with his father. When we meet with our Heavenly Father, there is a difference between talking *with* Him and talking *to* Him.

Four Myths About Quiet Time

1. Your quiet time must be between 4:00 and 6:00 am.
2. Your quiet time must last at least one hour.
3. Your quiet time journal must sound like the Bible.
4. Your quiet time must be every day.

Four Guidelines for Quiet Time

1. **Quiet your mind.** Remove all of the busy thoughts from your mind that distract you from the Lord.

2. **Focus your mind.** Worship helps us focus on God when we meet with Him. Just as in any relationship, we must focus on the other person.
3. **Pray your mind.** We were not designed to carry burdens. We were designed to cast or throw them on the Lord. Prayer is transference of the burden from our shoulders to the Lord's.
4. **Renew your mind.** Read the Word of God in a version you can understand. God understands your heart and desires for you to share it with Him.

Group Dynamics Idea The Bible describes many opportunities for feasting as the Lord commanded. Consider staying after group for a feast of your own in thanksgiving to the Lord for all He has done. Ask each person to bring a Thanksgiving dish and enjoy a meal together this week.

Discuss

1. What are some of the biggest challenges people face that keep them from having a quiet time with the Lord? Where is your favorite place to have a quiet time?
2. How does it make you feel when a person is texting or not paying attention to you during a conversation?
3. What are some strategies you use to quiet your mind and focus on God when you want to spend time with Him?
4. What are some reasons we should make time for God? What are the benefits of meeting with God?
5. If you had to explain to a friend how to renew your mind with the Word of God during a quiet time, what would you say?
6. *Leader: Ask someone to volunteer for a demonstration, and have them stand next to you and hold their arms out in front of them. Ask group members to name something that might worry, trouble, or burden a person's thoughts when they wake up in the morning. Each time a thought is mentioned, give something to the volunteer to hold. (Ex: If someone says, "unpaid bills," put a book in the volunteer's arms and say that it represents unpaid bills). Continue until the person can no longer hold anything else. Then explain that we can start our day by carrying all of life's burdens, but we are not*

supposed to. We need to intentionally give all of these things to God. Have the volunteer do their best to set everything down on the floor. Question: What would it be like to live free of those burdens every day? Why is it so difficult to leave them with the Lord and not pick them up? Read 1 Peter 5:6–8. Why does He want us to cast our troubles on Him, and what will He do?

Take Home

As we conclude, remember the following:

- We have complete access to the Father as His children.
- He desires to commune with us and spend time with us.
- Relate to the Lord as you would a personal relationship.
- We don't have to put strict regulations on our quiet time with God.
- Take time to quiet and focus your mind on the Lord.
- Cast your cares on Him, and renew your mind with His truth.

Prayer

Dear Lord, thank You for the privilege of spending time with You, our creator, savior, and friend. Heavenly Father, we ask that You protect our time and calendars as we pursue more quality time with You this week. Thank You for drawing near to us when we draw near to You. We love You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

New Leader Tip It can be easy to get off track during your group discussion, but consider using some of the following phrases to redirect your group to the topic at hand:

- "For the sake of time, we'll have to move on."
- "Let's get back to our question."
- "We'll have to talk about that more at our next luncheon."